Marks of a Living Church

THE MARKS OF A LOVING CHURCH.

2 Jn.5 A New Commandment- that ye love one another.

Intro. The wedding, an example to the church.
The loving couple.
Result- two large families brot together
friends from far and naar combined into new friendships.
The setting in the church. Because Paul and Catherine love each other two families and their intimate friends are made to love one another. And just so because God so loves us, in Christ we learn to love one another.

Then flashed into my mind the scene at Columbus, Ohio. Hundreds of ministers and elders of the church, divided into two factions, fighting each other over interpretations of doctrines and beliefs- to the sad extent of threatening [illegible] to divide the church permamently.

The aged apostle John, in commanding his little children to love one another, was speaking to Xn believers, those who composed the Church of Christ. A new commandment- that ye love one another. I asked myself the ?, What are the marks of a loving church?

II. Tolerance.

The term need not be defined. Someone has said that tolerance is seeing all the good you can in others and that intolerance is seeing all the evil you can, and shutting your eyes to what good there is there.

Burning and persecution of heretics in olden days makes us think of the intolerance of the Middle Ages. Our hearing of men of God being thrown out of their pulpits and churches today and about professors being tried before coutts for teaching after a certain manner in our schools makes us wonder whether or not we are still in the Middle Ages.

Two measures before our legislature and voters- compelling the Bible to be read in our schools and forbidding the teaching of evolution. Both measures are animated my a deadly intolerant attitude that is dedidedly un-christian to say the least.

2. What should be our attitude towards others who in their faith in God and Christ differ from uours?

The young lady who upon being asked to join the church, said, "I do not know whether I have any right to join this church."

"Why", asked the pastor, Dr. Alexander.

"Because I am not sure that I agree with you in theology. I am modern to my finger-tips."

"Daughter," Dr. Alexander replied, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ?"

"Yes", she said.

"And taking Him as your personal Savior and the revelation of your God, do you want to stand with us here for the things He stood for?"

"Yes", she replied.

"Then", said he, "You belong to our company."

II. Another mark of a loving church is inclusiveness.

The tragedy of Protestantism-a person with a strong following and a new interpretation either leaves the church or is kicked out, and he goes off and forms another denomination which makes itself exclusive-damning all others but themselves.

This local church made up of ones from different denominations, we are not all Presbyterians. Why should we not unite in the person of Jesus Christ and stand together for the things He stood for? How else could we maintain a community church?

The case of a family whose members had been baptized by sprinkling. They wished to join a church in their community which insists on baptism by immersion. This family does'nt object to that, but to that church's refusal to r ecognize their first baptism.

Should a Quaker come to us for admission and held conscientious scruples about being baptized at all, I would favor his admission just the same. Why let things like baptism divide us?

III. Another mark, granting the right to think the truth of God in terms of modern understanding.

Our younger generation trained according to the the teachings of archeology, history, comparative religion, literary criticism and other scientific studies must be allowed to love their God with all their scientifically trained mind.

IV. Another mark of a loving church is the social application of the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel is not only for the salvation of individuals but of society as well. Communities and nations must be saved as well as individuals. In fact, no individual is completely saved until the society of which he is a member is saved likewis A ~~living~~ loving church serves the whole community and the whole of humanity in every uplifting way possible.

V. A Loving Church is a demonstrating Church, exemplifyin to the world the power of God unto salvation.

By their fruits ye shall know them.

Its members a constant ~~x~~ invitation to others to "come and see"